

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant responds herein to the non-final Office Action mailed March 18, 2011 in the above-identified patent application.

Claims 1-16 are the claims currently pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 5, 6 and 8 are amended to clarify features recited thereby. These amendments are fully supported by Applicant's disclosure.

Rejection of Claims 1-4, 7-9, 12, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 12, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious from Thomas, WO 2003/080425 in view of Evans, U.S. Patent No. 4,456,404. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 recites features of claim 5, and the Office Action acknowledges (Office Action, page 4) that claims 5 and 6 recite allowable subject matter. Therefore, claims 1 and 8 are patentably distinguishable over the combination of Thomas and Evans.

Claims 2-4, 7, 12, 15 and 16 depend from claim 1, and claim 9 depends from claim 8. Therefore, claims 2-4, 7, 9, 12, 15 and 16 are patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as their respective base claim.

Rejection of Claims 1, 3, 7, 12, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 7, 12, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious from Thomas, U.S. Patent No. 5,224,798 in view of Evans. Reconsideration of this rejection is respectfully requested.

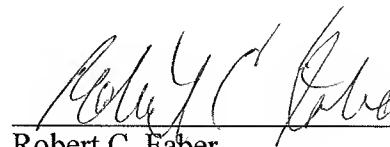
Claim 1 now incorporates features of claim 5, and the Examiner stated that claim 5 recites allowable subject matter. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentably distinguishable over the combination of Thomas '798 and Evans.

Claims 3, 7, 12, 15 and 16 depend from claim 1, and are therefore patentably distinguishable over the cited art for at least the same reasons.

In view of the foregoing discussion, withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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